

Question 1:

We recognize that the City of Victoria has a role to play in balancing the needs of all its citizens: homeowners, businesspeople, renters, and our unhoused neighbours. As such, local government has a responsibility to address the safety and public health hazards of all its citizens, including those faced by individuals in our community who are unhoused and living on the streets or parks. If elected, do you commit to supporting the following actions:

1. Enhanced lobbying efforts in the Capital Region to expand shelter spaces that meet the needs of the different populations (youth, seniors, women fleeing violence, etc.)
2. Ensure that the City's emergency response plan is updated to include improvements in responding to the needs of our unhoused neighbours (weather-related: warming/cooling areas, temporary sheltering sites, etc.)
3. Build By-law capacity that promotes the ability of officers to perform their work workers supports, warehousing of impounded items, review of protocols, etc.) and work alongside street outreach teams for better outcomes for our unhoused neighbours
4. Provide all City administrative and governance persons with anti-stigma, anti-oppression, antiracism, and culturally sensitive training

CENTRAL SAANICH	Councilor	KING, Zeb	<p>The question specifically notes the City of Victoria and then mentions services within "the City". I am a councillor in the District of Central Saanich and not the City of Victoria. That said, homelessness isn't only an issue for the City of Victoria. It is helpful to understand Central Saanich, however, and appreciate the social challenges facing this community.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As a Central Saanich councillor, I do not have a seat at the CRD board, but I'm always willing to work with concerned activists to find ways to address social issues like lack of housing. I commit to working with the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness and specifically regarding the need to connect with local activists in Central Saanich. 2. As a Councillor for Central Saanich I can't update the emergency response plan for the City of Victoria. However, I'm fully supportive of discussing potential actions that could see Central Saanich become a leader to address this topic. The heat-dome, flooding and other climactic conditions impact everyone, especially the unhoused. 3. Happy to discuss how this question which is mostly directed at the city could also be addressed in Central Saanich. 4. I really appreciate this need for training. Although you question is again referencing "the City," I think there are valuable insights for Central Saanich. We have a local police force and police board. The close community policing that we enjoy provides a great opportunity to embrace a progressive type of policing that is sensitive to these issues. I have recently become a Council representative to the Victoria region's Family Court and Yout Justice Committee. This body could also help increase the level of awareness and interest in training, discussions and better understanding both at the community level and organizations.
	Councilor	GRAHAM, Christopher	Yes to all
ESQUIMALT	Mayor	GRACEY, Sonya	Yes to all
	Councilor	MUNKACSI, Chris	Yes, I support these initiatives.
LANGFORD	Mayor	GOODMANSON, Scott Peter	Yes to all

OAK BAY	Councilor	FARMERE, Raymon	Yes, I commit to all of the above
	Councilor	SMART, Carrie	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes, I would like to help advocate for expanding more shelter spaces for different populations. 2. I commit to reviewing Oak Bay's emergency response plan to ensure it meets the needs of unhoused community members. 3. I will review our by-law and police response policies with the lens of good outcomes for our unhoused community members, and evaluate if work is needed in this response. 4. I will review our policies for staff cultural sensitivity training and if inadequate make a motion to improve staff training and awareness.
	Councilor	PATERSON, Esther	I will support a coordinated response from all levels of government to address shelter, resource workers and training to cope with individuals who are not housed. It is a regional problem that is disproportionately affecting residents in the City of Victoria. Professionals who have experience dealing with trauma, poverty and addictions should play a leadership role in developing training and response programs for front line workers.
	Councilor	GREEN, Cairine	Yes, I would support such efforts to better serve and protect the unhoused. As a former Board member of Our Place Society (OPS), I learned that the complex needs of the unhoused require a comprehensive approach from local and provincial authorities. Organizations such as OPS cannot address and manage alone, the very real challenges and barriers faced by the unhoused and the groups that work with them and provide programs and services. Unfortunately, the City core bears the brunt of the plight of the unhoused but other local governments can and do lend financial and member support through regional initiatives sponsored by the CRD, for example.
	Councilor	HELME, Roxanne	If elected to Oak Bay Council, I commit to supporting each of the 4 actions you have listed.
SAANICH	Mayor	MURDOCK, Dean	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes, I support enhanced lobbying efforts to expand shelter spaces 2. Warming and cooling centres are important parts of emergency response in our region. As Mayor, I will work with Council to ensure that weather related response shelters are available for our unhoused neighbours. 3. Yes, I support developing capacity to promotes officers' ability to perform their work and work alongside outreach teams. 4. Yes, I support anti-stigma, anti-oppression, antiracism and culturally sensitive training for people in administrative and governance roles.
	Councilor	BRICE, Susan	I support all these initiatives and have done at Saanich Council and the CRD. At its inception I sat on the Board of the Coalitin to End Homelessness.
	Councilor	MACDOUGALL, Jordan	Yes to all
	Councilor	LANGVIN, Basil	Yes, I commit to supporting all four of these actions.
	Councilor	WESTHAVER, Mena	My commitment to supporting those that are homeless and the individuals and services that support these individuals is a must. Short answer - yes.
	Councilor	DE VRIES, Zac	Yes
	Councilor	LEIREN-YOUNG, Mark	Yes to all of the above and I'd like to ensure that not just the city, but the region's emergency plan, is updated to deal with this. Having once lived in a community where people regularly froze to death in the winter, I'd also support lobbying the province to find better ways to approach this as a provincial issue..

	Councilor	CHAMBERS, Nathalie	Yes to all
	Councilor	REICHERT, Jordan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes absolutely, there is not enough diversity of shelter spaces available. 2. Yes, I support integrating the unhoused population more wholesomely into our emergency response planning. 3. Yes, all levels of government and enforcement need to work collaboratively to support efforts to promote better outcomes for unhoused populations. 4. Yes, it should be a fundamental aspect of all levels of government, including staff to ensure training in these areas to promote respectful discourse and help disarm divisive and hateful language in our communities.
	Councilor	BONDAROFF, Teale Phelps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes. Different communities have different needs, and we also need to consider the needs of LGBTQ2S+ people, people with disabilities, and people in need of culturally-appropriate support. 2. Yes. In the last several years we have seen how climate change is affecting shelter needs and we need to ensure that we have spaces available to meet community needs in emergencies. 3. Yes. Enforcement on its own is ineffective; we need to use a multi-disciplinary and collaborative approach to better support unhoused residents in our community. 4. Yes. I would also recommend the inclusion of trauma-informed training.
SIDNEY	Councilor	DUNCAN, Sara	As an incumbent running for Councillor in Sidney, I am aware of the ongoing lack of social supports and shelter spaces for the unhoused community on the Saanich Peninsula. I am supportive of greater contribution by our municipalities in providing those things on the peninsula and generally "sharing the load" with Victoria better in general. I am moderately supportive of culturally sensitive training initiatives – in some cases staff and first responder personnel have requested it, and have benefited greatly from a well-run program. However, I have also witnessed some very counter-productive programs out there that create more problems than they solve, so I would only be supportive of such a program if the facilitators and contents were reviewed by the municipalities and key stakeholders ahead of time.
SOOKE	Councilor	BELFORD, Susan	Yes to all
	Councilor	RUSSELL, Anna	Housing is a human right and we have always had an urgent need to make sure everyone in our community has housing that works for them. With climate change and an increase in extreme weather events, housing is becoming more and more a matter of life and death. There is a new meaning to the concept of "shelter" when our community faces temperatures high enough to kill and rainfall sufficient to wash away our roads. There is a new meaning to the concept of "refuge" when pandemic pressures result in much higher rates of family violence. People who are unhoused or unsafely housed are without protection of any kind in these events. If elected, I will lobby for expanded shelter spaces, truly affordable housing, and emergency response plans and I will also support staff to work respectfully with our unhoused neighbours.
VICTORIA	Mayor	ALTO, Marianne	<p>Yes to all.</p> <p>I've been involved with downtown service providers and users on discussions of these and many other related ideas for more than the last decade. Improving the lives of Victorians oppressed by stigma, poverty, racism and misunderstanding is one of the reasons I ran for local public office. We must continue to address those issues in our community that affect the well-being of all Victorians.</p>
	Mayor	ANDREW, Stephen	Yes to all.

Mayor	WIBOLTT, Michelle	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 🏠, pod villages (shelter, not/homestead (tiny homestead) YESTERDAY! If missing middle approves, including limit's/local's firsts/? . 2. 🏠 3. Already Amazon. 4. Absolutely (love's language, conflicts freedom)
Mayor	FUENTES, Rafael	I support all of your recommendations and I am prepared to advocate for them.
Councilor	THOMPSON, Dave	Yes to all
Councilor	YACOWAR, Tony	If elected to Council, I would commit to supporting all these actions. It is not only a moral obligation to care for the most vulnerable members of our society, it is an economic obligation as well. The long-term cost to society of ignoring the most urgent needs of our unhoused neighbours is far greater than the price of addressing them. Supporting these actions is a key part of building safe communities for all our citizens, and it is absolutely vital that we do so in concert with all levels of government to ensure that these actions have a sustainable long-term impact.
Councilor	CARADONNA, Jeremy	Yes, I commit to lobbying efforts, updating the emergency response plan, and evolving the role of bylaw and integrating with outreach teams. All of these commitments are made, directly or indirectly, on my platform.
Councilor	LOUGHTON, Krista	Yes to all
Councilor	COLEMAN, Christopher Mark	Yes to all
Councilor	KIM, Susan	Yes t all

	Councillor	ORCHERTON, Steve	<p>1. Yes, Lobbying is important but securing real support, funding and CRD housing solutions to address this issue from senior government is critical.</p> <p>2. Yes, the city needs to offer emergency response and supports for all community emergencies, however, these are ongoing temporary and seasonal issues that require securing real ongoing support, funding, from senior government.</p> <p>3. Police , Fire and By-law services are stressed to capacity now. Victoria City Council / residents alone can not solve these issues and our city is no different than many other municipal governments.</p> <p>Over the years Victoria Council has struggled to provide services to our disadvantaged citizens. Our city has applied resources, supported community organizations who help the disadvantaged and sadly we have not met our goals, and this is frustrating for all.</p> <p>We all see the homeless situation in Victoria worsening. While everyone deserves a roof over their head and a safe place to live, for many living on our street, that is simply not enough. I believe that as a community we have a collective responsibility to help vulnerable citizens irrespective of their individual social or economic circumstances. Everyone’s circumstance is different, and each will require different types of assistance. The current practice of moving homeless people off the street and into housing without recognizing and then addressing these individual needs often sees a repeat of bad behaviours occurring within the housing provided. We simply move the homeless off the street without addressing meaningfully the individual situations that citizens have- that is wrong.</p> <p>I believe we need to properly triage the homeless and determine what levels of help they really require (beyond housing). Determining individual histories, assessing drug or alcohol dependency, mental health assessment and proper treatment, employment training, and applying our judicial system to deal with any criminal elements.</p> <p>Our overarching welfare and social services systems for our citizens is a provincial responsibility, and homelessness and the attached issues are not just a Victoria problem and will not be solved by City of Victoria initiatives or band-aid provincial solutions, that do not include a proper triaging of people who need our help. Victoria along with other municipal jurisdictions must demand the province apply the necessary resources to this growing and continuing social problem.</p> <p>The City of Victoria is not positioned to conduct the “triage” of citizens in need or independently provide the resources required, but we must stand ready to assist when the province steps forward.</p> <p>4. Training of this nature is occurring now, but there is always more we can do in this regard.</p>
	Councillor	KING, Anna	Yes, I would wholeheartedly support these actions. Once elected, I will collaborate with local community groups, Indigenous partners, and other GVRD stakeholders to implement the Community Plan to EndHomelessness in the Capital Region.
	Councillor	GARDINER, Marg	Yes to all
	Councillor	DUNCAN, Rob	Yes to all

	Councillor	PARENTEAU, Emmanuel	<p>The multiple dozens of housing solutions (shelters, supportive housings, low income and fixed rentals and CRD housing) in the Capital Region District have failed to stem the incoming flow of homeless from off the island and even as far as Eastern Canada. The more we build, the more come. We cannot continue to do this indefinitely. However, none of our facilities are equipped as complex care facilities. We need at least one (hopefully a converted hotel already owned by BC Province) to be converted to sobriety, mental health and job skills centre for those who are at the top of the spectrum. Once sober, if they are not placed on a skills upgrade track, they will return to minimum wage and therefore shelter life and relapse.</p> <p>For the more difficult segments of the homeless demographic, we cannot leave them in most of the housing options as they are either being victimized or victimizing others. A rule-based, no street-drugs style of more evolved, complex care would out perform the current shelter-only model. The BC Province and perhaps federal government would have to be on board. But the city can formulate a plan and approach the province.</p> <p>I also believe an increase in police officers will be necessary due to the size of our homeless demographic. The creation of a bylaw and police officer tandem program (e.g.: homeless engagement special units) will allow a more specialized interaction series between law enforcement and this demographic.</p>
VIEW ROYAL	Councillor	MACKENZIE, Alison	I agree that the City of Victoria has a role to play in balancing the needs of all its citizens including those who are unhoused. If elected, I would strongly encourage City of Victoria Councillors to consider the outlined proposals further
	Councillor	BROWN, Don	I agree with and if elected I will support the 4 actions listed. I am running in the Town of View Royal but I believe all the communities in the Capital Regional District need to play active roles in helping the needs of all of our community residents.